Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

In the Claims:

- 1. (Previously Amended) Process for preparing venlafaxine which comprises
 - (a) converting a venlafaxine precursors selected from the group of N,N—didesmethYl venlafaxine of formula (I), a salt thereof, spiro venlafaxine of formula (II) and a salt thereof

$$H_2N$$
 OH
 MeO
 MeO
 MeO
 MeO
 MeO
 MeO
 MeO
 MeO

to venlafaxine, wherein the conversion is carried out in the presence of a salt of formic acid which is selected from the group of a metal salt or an ammonium salt of formic acid, and wherein the molar ratio of the salt of formic acid to the venlafaxine precursor is 0.3-10 to 1, and

(b) optionally reacting the venlafaxine with an acid to prepare an acid addition salt of venlafaxine.

- 2. (Previously Amended) Process according to claim 1, wherein the molar ratio is 0.5-3 to 1.
- 3. (Currently Amended) Process according to claims 1 or 2 claim 1, wherein the metal salt of formic acid is an alkali or earth alkaline metal salt of formic acid.
- 4. (Previously Amended) Process according to claim 3, wherein the alkali metal salt of formic acid is a Na, K or Li salt.
- (Currently Amended) Process according to any one of claims 1 to 4 claim 1, wherein in step (a) N,N-didesmethyl venlafaxine (I) or a salt thereof is converted to venlafaxine in the presence of formaldehyde and formic acid
- 6. (Previously Amended) Process according to claim 5, wherein in step (a) the N,N-didesmethyl venlafaxine (I) is used in form of its HCl addition salt.
- 7. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 5 or 6, wherein in step (a) the conversion is effected in the presence of also an alkali metal or earth alkaline metal hydroxide or NH_4OH in such an amount that it forms in-situ the salt of formic acid.
- 8. (Previously Amended) Process according to claim 7, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is NaOH which forms in-situ Na formiate.